

NATURAL RESOURCE COMMISSION MEETING AND TOUR

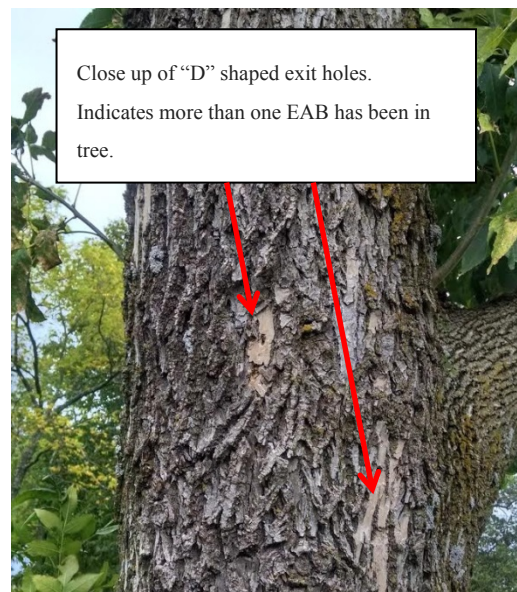
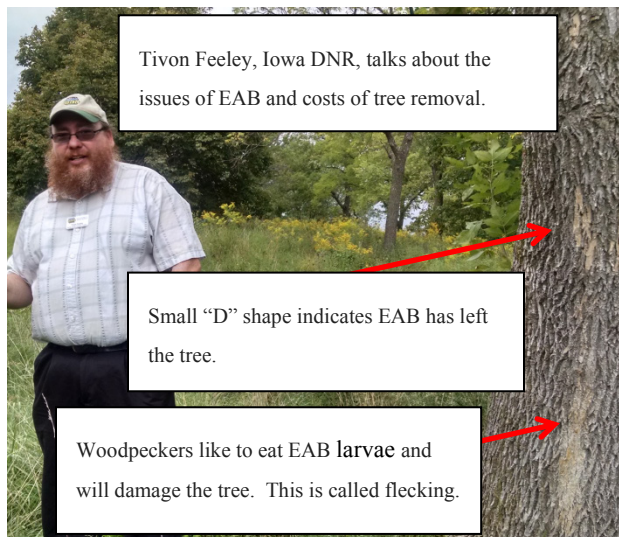
September 7 Meeting. The Natural Resource Commission met at Lake Darling State Park, located near Brighton, Iowa, on September 7 and 8. The Commission toured the Park on September 7 and the following was discussed.

Emerald Ash Borer. Tivon Feeley, Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR), discussed the problems Iowa is having with the [Emerald Ash Borer](#) (EAB). The EAB is a small, invasive insect that bores into ash trees. The insect was first found in Michigan in 2002. The adult insect is metallic green, about one-half inch long, and lives on the outside of an ash tree. The EAB feeds on the leaves during the summer. The larvae look similar to white grubs and feed on the living plant tissue under the bark. The tree dies from this tunneling activity as it disrupts its vascular flow.

A survey was completed on several towns and cities in Iowa on the estimated cost to remove ash trees. The following results were received:

- Waterloo — \$15.0 million.
- Des Moines — \$10.0 million.
- Council Bluffs — \$23.0 million.
- Sioux City — \$52.0 million.

Below are two photos that detail the damage done to an ash tree located at Lake Darling State Park. Removing these trees will add to the expense of operating state parks, as most of them have ash trees.



Other Items Discussed. The tour continued around Lake Darling State Park with Ethan Rutledge, Natural Resources Aid, and Park Ranger Zach Haworth. Items discussed included:

- The installation of various practices around the Park that protect water quality. This includes a water quality swale project that filters stormwater runoff in the parking lot located in front of the lodge.
- Revenue generated at the Park. This includes renting boats and paddleboats, as well as renting the lodge and cabins. Several new cabins recently opened this past year and were rented frequently during the summer.

September 8 Meeting. The Commission met on September 8 and the following was discussed:

River Tours. Director Chuck Gipp stated that the Department has been conducting tours on various rivers around Iowa to demonstrate how important rivers are as a resource. This included Winnebago River in Mason City, Beaver Creek in Johnston, and Cedar River in Waterloo.

FY 2018 Budget Request. The Commission approved the Department's budget request for FY 2018. This is a status quo budget compared to FY 2017. State General Fund requests include:

- Department Operations — \$12.9 million.
- Floodplain Management — \$2.0 million.
- Forestry Health Management — \$500,000.

Land Acquisitions. The Commission approved three land acquisitions from the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, including:

- Two properties totaling 84 acres in Dickinson County near Garlock Slough Wildlife Management Area for a total purchase price of \$295,000. Funding is from the federal North American Wetlands Conservation (NAWCA) Grants.
- One property with 59 acres near Clear Lake Wildlife Management Area for a price of \$260,000. Funding is from the Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) Fund Open Spaces Account.

Other Items Discussed. The Commission discussed topics to be included in the next annual report to the Legislature and also discussed next year's meeting schedule.

Next Meeting. The next meeting will be held on October 13 in Des Moines. For additional information please refer to the [Commission's](#) website.

STAFF CONTACT: Deb Kozel (515-281-6767) deb.kozel@legis.iowa.gov